

And that's just the way it is.

#### EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR JAPAN

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise this evening on behalf of the people of the State of Ohio to offer our great heartfelt support to our brothers and sisters in the nation of Japan. Every person in the world really is bound with compassion and with hope that we can find a way to help heal the great damage that is occurring there and has occurred. I know that we have over 12 naval vessels that have moved across the Pacific to offer assistance, and nations around the world will try to help the people of Japan.

My message this evening is one of hope to the Japanese people, so many that I have met in my own career, certainly their national leaders in the Diet, in their executives, so many educational leaders, and just the people of Japan who have been so kind to us on our visits there. I hope they know that Japanese Americans living in our country, certainly in Ohio's Ninth District, are bound with them in an attitude of rebuilding and healing.

As the State of Ohio's name mean "hello," we offer tonight a very special hello to the valiant people of Japan.

#### OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LONG). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I do echo the comments of my friend from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR). Our hearts do go out, our prayers do go out for the people in Japan, difficult time there.

At the same time, there are so many people struggling in this country. There are so many people out of work; and although in the last week gas prices have come down some, sadly in the wake of the Japan tragedy, there is no doubt speculation will eventually go back up unless this administration stops, ceases, desists in putting our natural resources off limits for our use to help our economy to create jobs for our citizens. You know, certainly other countries welcome the pigheadedness of those in charge of this administration who are determined to keep us from using our own resources.

We had a hearing today in the Natural Resources Committee, and the chairman of the Railroad Commission, the regulating body in Texas, Ms. Elizabeth Jones, had indicated—and I was not aware of what exactly she had said—but, apparently, this administration is making a big deal of reopening and granting a permit that actually was not a new permit. This is something that had been pending that was a re-release and was not a new permit.

And how ironic, the ultimate irony, that this administration's first supposed new permit would be to a drilling project in which British Petroleum, BP, would be the major investor. How about that? This administration simply cannot get away from trying to help their buddies at BP.

It was interesting to hear our friend across the aisle from Massachusetts in our hearing today indicate that in the European waters, off their coasts, they have the same driller, the same international companies; and yet, the safety records over there are much better than they are in the Gulf of Mexico. Quite interesting because the only difference is, in this country, the administration is run by those who help out President Obama, and they have sadly looked the other way while BP racked up safety violation after safety violation, after dozens of safety violations.

In the meantime, the other major drillers had one, two violations over the same period. BP racked up dozens of violations and then hundreds of violations until they had reached around 800 safety violations. But did this administration rein them in? No.

And then we later read that actually when this administration could not bring itself to really come down on BP after the disastrous blowout of the Deepwater Horizon, that BP executives were negotiating and working out the day, the time, the place that they would come out in support of President Obama's and our Democratic colleagues' great pride and joy called the cap-and-trade bill. I don't want to offend people by calling it the crap-and-trade bill, so we will call it the cap-and-trade bill instead of what I really think it is.

But they were negotiating to come out and be the administration's one big international energy company that embraced this whole cap-and-trade bill. Why? Because they had special perks they were getting out of it with regard to carbon sales, and so they were coming onboard.

□ 1900

Well, of course this administration did not want to come down on BP when they were going to be the big energy company that came out saying, Yes, we're for this cap-and-trade bill. Yes, we think it's good. Why? Because we're going to get rich off of it even though Americans are going to be paying out the nose for energy once this thing kicks in. Americans will be losing their jobs right and left; but, boy, we will make a lot of money because we're cronies with the administration. So they were going to come out in support.

The administration didn't want to shut them down. They were hoping that what BP was telling them about it not really being that big of a deal would be true. So of course the President didn't fly down there immediately, like he had said about President Bush that he should have after Katrina. This President waited and

waited, really didn't want to come down on BP because these were his buddies that were going to help him get across the finish line the cap-and-trade bill. They were the guys that had safety violation after safety violation. So it gets a little difficult to hear friends across the aisle talk about cronyism when we know that when you really examine the facts where the cronyism lies.

We have heard people talk about how offensive it was that there were offshore leases that had language removed from the pricing from which royalties were paid that cost the United States Treasury billions of dollars in royalties that rightfully would have been the U.S. Treasury's, except that our hearings indicated that there was actually at least one or two people in the Clinton administration who had it pointed out. Hey, we need this language in here that allows us to get the amount of royalties we should. But they were instructed, We are leaving it out here.

When we had a hearing with a friend of the Clinton administration, a former appointee of the Clinton administration who had done his research, I asked him why he had not questioned those people who had ordered that that language be kept out. He said, Well, they left the administration, so we really can't question them. They are in the private sector now.

Well, you do a little further research, and you find out that the private sector, these people that cost the United States Government billions of dollars and made billions of dollars for the cronies of the Democrats in the Big Oil, they actually had gone to work for British Petroleum. How about that. So to have heard the former Clinton appointee who did the investigations say, Well, I couldn't possibly question these people because they left, and they were in the private sector, I was surprised because if someone intentionally and knowingly defrauds the government, it's a crime. And the FBI doesn't have any trouble normally going after folks, subpoenaing records. They know how to do it. They do it quite well. But they didn't go after these individuals because—well, they had left government service, and this one in particular had gone to work for British Petroleum. How about that.

So imagine our surprise in 2009 when we find out that the person who was most knowledgeable about the language being taken out that cost us billions of dollars and had gone to work for British Petroleum had now been brought on to the Obama administration to supervise these offshore leases. How about that. Or to quote our friends from Saturday Night Live: "What's up with that?" It cost the country billions of dollars, went to work for British Petroleum, and then you bring them back on and put them in charge of the offshore leases?

Then we find out that those who worked for the Interior Department,

the offshore rig inspectors who stand between this country and disastrous problems off the coast that are man-made, are the ones within the Bureau of Land Management that were allowed to unionize.

Well, that sounds kind of strange because, you know, union negotiations—normally, if you go back to the inception of unions, it was to overcome issues of corporate greed. It didn't seem to fit here because here were people that were supposed to stand between our Nation and man-made disasters off our coast. And they were allowed to unionize because we know unions, they'll negotiate—oops, these folks can't work too many hours, can't work too many hours in succession. You have got to do this. You can't go—you know, there are all kinds of things negotiated. It would be like negotiating a union contract on behalf of the military soldiers. You can't overwork them. You can't expect them to work too late into the evening, travel too much.

When people are standing between us and disaster, it just is not appropriate to have contracts negotiated in a union manner, because they stand between us and disaster. It's not appropriate for people in the military, and it's not appropriate for our offshore rig inspectors. If they have to work extra hours, if they have to travel extra, if they have to do some task to ensure that our country does not get devastated because of man-made negligence, a disaster off our coast, they will have to do that job; and if you don't like it, go to work for the private sector.

That is the way it was supposed to be, not to have unions organize people who stand between us and disaster. Because if you go back to the founding, the Founders anticipated—and some of them wrote in their letters, in their diaries that we had within our grasp, they indicated, the chance to do what philosophers had only dreamed about, to govern ourselves.

We can understand the need for union collective bargaining, to overcome corporate greed in cases where it's occurred; but to need unions to extort things from the government that is supposed to be "We, the people," in a democratic Republic? Offshore inspectors standing between us and disaster, and they get to have a bargaining session where, Gee, we don't want them to work too many hours even if it meant saving America, saving thousands of jobs.

Well, in the hearing where we heard from the director of the Bureau of Land Management who was over that whole system, when I asked, What are the checks and balances? Since you have these offshore inspectors unionized, what are the checks and balances that protect us from disaster? It should be these offshore inspectors. So how do you ensure that the allegations that we read and have been hearing that some of the administration's offshore inspectors had been bribed, have been given

perks to look the other way with safety violations, and they had done so—we've read allegations of that kind of thing. So what is it that protects us and ensures there are checks and balances to make sure offshore inspectors are not bribed, are not given things to make them look the other way?

And the director indicated they do have a solid system of checks and balances for such offshore inspectors. They send them out in teams of two people at a time. That way, we can rest assured that if one inspector were subjected to some type of bribe or perk, something to look the other way, the other inspector would report them, would refuse to accept the bribe or the perk to look the other way, so that we could rest assured that we were protected.

□ 1910

Apparently, she was not aware that I was aware that the last two-person team of inspectors that went out, sent by this administration out to the Deepwater Horizon before the disastrous blowout, was a father and son unionized inspection team. That's who was sent to stand between us and disaster.

Now, there are some disasters, like earthquakes, like tsunamis, that insurance companies call acts of God. I still do, too. I don't believe that God causes those things to happen to punish people. I think He has the power to do so.

But we do have the power to build and to inspect and to prepare for disasters so that we can mitigate and minimize damages after such things occur. But you can't very well mitigate and minimize when you're allowing the kind of abuses that have gone on from this administration with the cronies in Big Oil like British Petroleum.

And it's interesting to have heard, today, friends across the aisle trying to wrap British Petroleum around Republicans' necks as an albatross when, actually, the group that has protected British Petroleum over and over has allowed them to continue to drill, and when this administration finally got around to granting a new permit that really wasn't new after all, it happens to be to their cronies, their buddies—good old crony capitalism—where BP is the major investor. How about that? Another "and what's up with that?"

BP gets the latest right to drill in the gulf when others have lost thousands of jobs, families have been left destitute. And that means not just that the workers who work on those oil rigs have been hurt, their families have been hurt, and then all the places where they did business have been hurt. The restaurants, clothing stores, everybody who did business with those have been suffering because this administration did not punish the company responsible for nearly 800 safety violations. It punished all those who were not their cronies.

And how ironic that the biggest financial supporter of this administration and Democratic politics, in George

Soros, had as his biggest individual investment in Brazilian drilling, oil and gas.

How ironic that when this administration granted a \$2 billion loan from the United States of money—we don't have over 40 cents of every dollar of that \$2 billion that we have to borrow and pay interest on—we loaned it to Brazil to do offshore drilling that we won't allow here.

Oh, but by the way, that helps the Democrats' biggest supporter financially, George Soros, with his biggest individual investment; so, therefore, it's okay to drill off the coast of Brazil with money borrowed from America at low interest rates that we have to borrow from other countries at a different interest rate. That's just astounding.

And then we have calls to eliminate the method that has produced over 100 years, perhaps 200 years, of natural gas reserves. We've been provided information that indicates that if all of the 18-wheelers in America started utilizing natural gas instead of gasoline or diesel, then we would cut our dependency on those who hate us by 50 percent. But no, we're not going to do that.

In fact, there are measures being pushed by this administration and the EPA to eliminate our ability to utilize over 100, 200 years of natural gas that could provide our electricity, even cutting the need for more nuclear power plants. It could be of tremendous assistance in cutting our reliance on foreign oil. And this administration wants to eliminate that ability. It makes no sense.

Our hearts still go out to Japan for the decimation that's occurred, for the loss of life and the livelihoods, and this administration has expressed that so eloquently. But not so for this administration's actual activities to help the lives and livelihoods in the gulf coast area of those who this administration didn't save their job. They cost them their job. They cost them their livelihood. They caused gasoline prices to go up because we will not help ourselves.

We were told when gasoline reached \$4 a gallon that probably 25 percent or more of that was speculation. Well, when speculators see that we're doing nothing to help ourselves with our own energy needs and, in fact, we're making it more and more difficult to produce our own oil, gas, natural resources to take care of ourselves and instead are going deeper and deeper in debt to countries that don't like us—thank goodness we're friends with Canada, and they're helpful in our energy needs. But we're funding some of the very terrorism we're concerned about in the Middle East because we refuse to use our own natural resources.

I was told by a Chinese gentleman that he thought he had figured out what our energy policy was, because often the Chinese, they look farsighted. They look down the road. They try to examine issues and policies in a farsighted manner generations down the road, when we here in America sometimes have a hard time looking at what

we're going to do tonight. Certainly, tomorrow is a stretch.

But, anyway, this Chinese gentleman had said, I think we figured out what you are doing. You continue constantly to put your own natural resources off limits, and that forces the rest of the world to use all of their natural resources. And then eventually everyone will have used their natural resources but you, and then you'll be the only one with natural resources. You'll still be the superpower, and you'll still be the superdominant country in the world because everyone else lost their resources. They're used up, and you still have yours.

And I told him, I wish I could take credit and say you caught us; that's our plan. Everybody else used up their natural resources. But we haven't been that strategic in our thinking. No, we're just having people say it may devastate the economy. Obviously, it is. It does when you put your natural resources off limits.

But they claim that will save the environment, not understanding that when you devastate an economy and people are losing their jobs and they can't pay their bills, they're not concerned about the environment. They're concerned about getting by and just living. And it's only when you have a vibrant economy, like we did have, that you have a country where we're concerned about pollution of air and water, and we rein it in.

Instead, policies of this administration are sending more and more jobs overseas where they pollute four to ten times more than we do doing the same job, and yet that pollution goes into the same atmosphere and often floats over into our country. Mercury, toxic materials come floating up because we ran those manufacturers off in thinking we were doing some good for the economy and for the environment, and we were hurting both.

□ 1920

That's not the way it works when you have natural resources, when you have been so richly blessed, as we have been in this country, with so many resources. You're expected to be good stewards, to use those resources wisely, but don't be an idiot and not use them. We've been blessed with them. Use them.

Help the environment, help the economy, and you help the world.

As I mentioned here before—but I've not forgotten—a West African told me last year when I was over in West Africa that they were all excited when we elected an African American as President; but they have seen this President's policies weakening America, and he asked me to make sure people here understood that, when we weaken or allow America to grow weaker, we hurt the peace-loving people around the world, particularly Christians, who want to live in peace.

He said, When you allow the United States to get weaker, we don't have

hope of anyone coming to our rescue when people come after us. You're our hope in this world. Please tell your friends in Congress and in the administration, Don't keep weakening your country. You're hurting those who hope and want peace around the world.

We owe it to ourselves. We owe it to all of those who want peace around the world and who count on us to act responsibly.

I know the Obama administration and those in the Interior Department have said, Gee, we're not going to be allowing these risky ventures out in the Gulf of Mexico. Yet they turn around and let the most unconscionable violator of safety regulations be the major investor in the permit they just released.

And what about these major oil companies that keep being demonized? A moratorium in the gulf has caused many of them to move rigs to other countries. They won't be back for a number of years, if at all. We're costing ourselves thousands of jobs, and we're forcing ourselves to send more money to countries that hate our guts.

And what about those who are unable to just move because they're international, big companies—the independent oil companies—of which we have numerous in Texas and in Louisiana and in other Gulf States? Well, they can't just take off and go to Brazil or go to other countries. They go out of business. They've got nowhere else to go because this administration is putting them and those they hire and those they buy from out of business.

It makes no sense to keep shooting ourselves in the foot and hurting those who rely on us.

Now, we've had a temporary cessation in the explosion in gas prices. There is a chance here that the administration will take advantage of it and will quit running off more jobs with more regulations and continuing an actual moratorium, in fact, on offshore drilling. There is a chance that the administration will take advantage of this time-out to say, You know what? We've seen the light. We've heard the human cry from across America about expensive gas prices. We've heard the human cry about 100-plus years of natural gas, so we're going to encourage cars or 18-wheelers to start utilizing natural gas for their fuel. It does not produce carbon monoxide, which truly is poisonous and dangerous to human life.

So it's a good idea. My friend across the aisle, DAN BOREN, has a great bill. I'm hoping that the House will move it, that the Senate will take it up and that the President will sign it, and we can help ourselves get off such an incredible reliance on foreign oil.

It's time to start helping ourselves. It's time for people to stop helping those simply because they've helped them get elected. It's time for people here in Washington to follow our oath, to protect our country, and that in-

cludes helping to create a strong economy. That means, like doctors who have taken the oath to do no harm, we should take the same oath:

First, do no harm. Quit trying to force people out of business because you don't like them.

Once we do that, we'll be on the road to a greater economy than this Nation has ever experienced.

Now I want to finish up. I was given a book of an historical nature. It's called, "Mr. JONES, Meet the Master." It has sermons and prayers of Peter Marshall during his time as Chaplain of the United States Senate during the 1940s. It has got some wonderful material in here, and I would just like to finish my time by reading a prayer by the Chaplain of the U.S. Senate as he prayed it in the U.S. Senate. Senate Chaplain Peter Marshall prayed these words in the U.S. Senate:

"Our Father in Heaven, give us the long view of our work and our world.

"Help us to see that it is better to fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than to succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail.

"May Thy will be done here, and may Thy program be carried out, above party and personality, beyond time and circumstance, for the good of America and the peace of the world. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord, amen."

That was the prayer of Chaplain Peter Marshall during his time as Chaplain of the United States Senate.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### THE PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, my name is KEITH ELLISON. I claim the time on behalf of the Progressive Caucus. I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for providing the time so that we can share our views and opinions about the world we live in and about the importance of Congress' being responsive to the American people.

Tonight, I am here on behalf of the Progressive Caucus. The Congressional Progressive Caucus is a caucus in the United States Congress, 83-member-strong, who can be counted on to stand up for peace as opposed to war, who can be counted on to stand up for working and middle class people and economic justice and a fair distribution of our Nation's resources, who can be counted on to stand up for civil and human rights, who believe that color, culture, sexual orientation, and things like this are not important as they relate to the worth or merit of a human being, and we can be counted on to stand up for these ideas that make our country great.

In fact, for every great movement in our country, whether it has been the